



LAC-IEE-05-15

ENVIRONMENTAL THRESHOLD DECISION

Country: Bolivia

Activity Title: Amboró-Madidi Corridor Landscape Conservation Program

Activity Number: SO4, IR2

Life of Project: FY 2006 – FY 2009

Life of Project Funding: \$5.8 million

IEE Prepared by: Morris Israel, USAID/Bolivia, ENV Team

Date Prepared: June 14, 2005

Recommended Threshold Decision: Categorical Exclusion/Negative Determination with Conditions/Deferred Decision

Bureau Threshold Decision: Categorical Exclusion/Negative Determination with Conditions//Deferred Decision

Comments:

Pursuant to 22 CFR 216.2 (c)(2)(i), (iii), (xiii) and (xiv), it is recommended that a **Categorical Exclusion** be issued for activities involving environmental education, technical assistance, training, studies, technical assistance, institutional support, capacity building, development planning and other actions which will not have an adverse impact on the natural or physical environment.

A **Negative Determination with Conditions** is recommended for activities involving small-scale construction (e.g., interpretative centers, park guard facilities, ecotourism lodges, and nature trails). Implementation of these activities will adhere to USAID LAC Environmental Guidelines.

A **Deferred Decision** is recommended for sustainable agriculture activities. Should any proposed activities include support for sustainable agriculture, or the procurement or use of pesticides, a supplemental IEE will be prepared (as per 22 CFR 216.3 (b) in the case of pesticides) and submitted to the BEO.

CTOs are responsible for making sure environmental conditions are met. It is the responsibility of the SO Team to ensure that activity related SOAGs, MAARDs and contracting documents contain specific instructions reflecting this Threshold Decision, including the provision of (and any necessary training in the use of) the indicated LAC Environmental Guidelines for activities that have a Negative Determination with Conditions.

_____ Date _____

Victor H. Bullen
Bureau Environmental Officer
Bureau for Latin America & the Caribbean

Copy to: Liliana Ayalde, Mission Director
USAID/Bolivia

Copy to: Holly Ferrette, MEO, USAID/Bolivia

Copy to: Dana Peterson, Program office

Copy to; Bruce Bayle, Regional Environmental
Advisor, USAID/Colombia

Copy to: Beth Hogan, LAC/SA

Copy to: IEE File

Attachment: IEE

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INITIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EXAMINATION

Location:	Bolivia
Project Title:	Amboró-Madidi Corridor Landscape Conservation Program
Project Number:	SO4, IR2
Life of Activity:	October 2005 – September 2009
Life of Project Funding:	\$5.8 million DA (includes \$1.0 million in Basic Education funds)
IEE Prepared by:	Morris Israel, USAID/Bolivia, ENV Team

Summary Recommendations:

1. **Categorical Exclusion** for activities involving institutional strengthening, environmental education, technical assistance, training and other activities not having a significant impact on the natural environment, pursuant to 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(i), (ii), (iii), and (xiv).
2. **Negative Determination** for activities involving small-scale construction (e.g., interpretative centers, park guard facilities, ecotourism lodges, nature trails). Implementation of these activities will adhere to LAC-approved environmental guidelines.
3. **Deferred Decision** for the sustainable agriculture component. Should Title I funding materialize and should any of the proposed activities include support for the procurement and/or use of pesticides, a supplemental IEE, prepared as per 22 CFR 216.3(b), will be submitted to the BEO.

This IEE covers planned activities under Intermediate Result 2 (“Targeted Parks and Protected Areas Conserved”) of the Mission’s Environment Strategic Objective. Two activities are included, each of which is describe below:

1. Landscape Conservation
2. Valuation of Environmental Services

I. Activity Descriptions

The overall objective of the activities is to create a favorable climate for conservation among the local population of the Amboró- Madidi Corridor (AMC) by (1) fostering and augmenting their direct participation in decision-making for the management and conservation of the protected areas; (2) increasing awareness of the benefits of conservation through environmental education and training; (3) identifying and realizing

the economic potential of activities in and around the protected areas that are consistent with conservation (e.g., apiculture, ecotourism, harvesting of non-timber forest products); and (4) promoting sound conservation policies.

A. Landscape Conservation Activity (\$4.4m DA + \$1.0m in Basic Education DA)

Bolivia's protected areas system covers nearly 16% of the country, including some of the world's most diverse areas, but are also home to some of the nation's poorest and most marginalized peoples. These protected areas are couched within larger human and ecological landscapes providing opportunities to "scale-up" conservation and socio-economic development efforts to achieve human well-being and biodiversity conservation success at a landscape level. The poverty, combined with a lack of capacity and resources for effective governance at the local and national levels threatens the health of the nation's biodiversity, the integrity of protected areas, and the ability of these ecosystems to sustain further human development.

Geographic Focus: The primary focus of this program is the conservation of biodiversity in the Amboró-Madidi Corridor. However, in exceptional circumstances and with sufficient justification, one landscape outside the corridor may be included in an integrated program focus.

Landscape Focus: The program will have a landscape level approach to biodiversity conservation which extends beyond protected area boundaries to conserve the full range of species, natural habitats, and ecological processes of a larger area, while taking into account relevant cultural, political, and economic considerations. A landscape can be defined according ecological (such as species range or delineation of watersheds), political or other parameters. Protected areas within these landscapes are impacted by various forces operating outside their boundaries; therefore some conservation interventions must be targeted at these larger, macro-scale factors, which may include policy, international and regional markets, and socio-political stability. Such an approach requires partnerships among diverse stakeholders, including communities, local and national governments, nongovernmental organizations, academia and the private sector. A landscape approach to conservation provides:

- An ecologically appropriate scale to conserve the full suite of biodiversity and ecological functions;
- A geographic scale that enables more relevant assessment of the social, political, and economic context of the threats to biodiversity and opportunities to mitigate them;
- A framework to align conservation priorities identified at the community scale with national, regional, and global conservation priorities;
- Better links between field-based activities and policy development;
- A framework for building partnerships required by the complexity of conservation; and,
- A framework for cross-sectoral coordination and cooperation.

Programmatic Focus: A principal objective of this program is to abate threats and take advantage of opportunities for biodiversity conservation in targeted landscapes. The development of specific interventions will be based on and directly linked to an analysis of threats and opportunities for conservation. Primary programmatic focal areas for achieving this will emerge from the threats analyses, but may include the following: 1) improving sustainable livelihood and income generation opportunities for local populations which are explicitly linked to conservation; 2) building a constituency for biodiversity conservation and protected areas; 3) promoting effective governance of biodiversity, natural resources and protected areas; and 4) implementing relevant policy interventions.

- 1) **Livelihoods:** By improving the livelihoods and income generation capacity of local communities in a conservation landscape, through sustainable enterprise initiatives *closely linked to the stewardship of ecosystems and natural resources*, incentives can be created for long-term conservation of biodiversity. Well designed initiatives can help local communities and indigenous peoples benefit from the sustainable production and marketing of natural resources (e.g., ecotourism, non-timber forest products, and sustainable agricultural practices which increase production and decrease negative impact to surrounding ecosystems). Efforts are needed to better link market information, technical expertise in sustainable production, extraction and management and local or indigenous knowledge of natural resource products and services. Innovative partnerships or alliances with the private sector can bring new opportunities for economic growth while conserving biodiversity.
- 2) **Constituency Building:** There is great potential and an urgent need for building a strong constituency in target landscapes and at a national level for biodiversity conservation. A society which values and promotes the sustainable management and conservation of biodiversity and natural resources is essential to its long-term development and well-being. Activities in this focus area may include the development of environmental education and communication programs and tools and the valuation of ecosystems and protected areas. Environmental education and communication interventions may be complemented by approximately \$1.0 million of Basic Education funds over two years.
- 3) **Governance:** The effective, transparent and equitable governance of biodiversity and protected areas is essential to the long-term stability and development of human communities and the health of ecosystems in Bolivia. Governance arrangements can include institutions and laws; participation rights and representation; the locus of authority; accountability and transparency; property rights and tenure; and conflict prevention and mitigation. Activities in this focus area may include capacity building of municipal governments, local communities and indigenous groups and strengthening democratic governance and reduction of resource-based conflicts through land tenure reform and property rights activities.

- 4) **Policy Initiatives:** The creation implementation and perpetuation of a policy environment which supports biodiversity conservation is important on the local, municipal, departmental and national levels. Policy frameworks must not only be developed, but also implemented, to be effective. This can involve developing guidelines for the implementation of policy, supporting documentation of claims within the policy framework (such as in the case of land tenure), providing training on policy implementation, or supporting the execution of the policies. Policy work can help support interests of indigenous peoples by ensuring that the policy framework is equitable and incorporates the interests of a broad range of stakeholders. In addition, assistance in the implementation of policies may be particularly critical for indigenous peoples.

Sustainable Agriculture in Buffer Zones Activity (unspecified funding levels)

Subject to the availability of funds, the landscape conservation program described above may be complemented by two other activities with distinct funding sources: an environmental education activity drawing on Basic Education funds (as noted above), and a sustainable agriculture activity using Title I funds. These would be integrated into the overall program and would be implemented by the same consortium.

The rapid expansion of agricultural production over the last century has had a profound negative effect on biodiversity globally through habitat destruction, unsustainable use of agricultural inputs (fertilizers, pesticides etc), and overuse and contamination of fresh water resources. At the same time, healthy ecosystems and biodiversity are essential to strong agricultural productivity. Ecosystems services essential to agricultural production include: pollination, dispersal, use of wild species for increased production, soil fecundity, and freshwater supply. The integration of agricultural development and conservation of wild biodiversity, building on landscape-level approaches to conservation is increasingly important to sustaining the well-being of human populations and the health of biodiverse ecosystems.

Currently, the ecological integrity of many of Bolivia's protected areas is directly threatened by agricultural expansion and encroachment into parks from the buffer zone regions and from the wider landscape mosaic. Whether this expansion is at a commercial or smallholder scale, the incorporation of sustainable solutions to this threat is necessary for biodiversity conservation and human-development success for programs at the landscape-scale. This activity would address the threat of agricultural encroachment on Bolivia's protected areas in the AMC. The program must demonstrate explicit links between proposed activities, increased or sustained agricultural production, and the conservation of biodiversity in and around protected areas in the Corridor. Activities may include the promotion of integrated pest management, training in techniques for improved soil and water management, and marketing.

B. Valuation of Environmental Services Activity (\$0.4m over two years)

This activity is proposed as a separate award, and is not incorporated into the umbrella conservation activity described above because the subject is cross-cutting and can benefit other components of the ENV portfolio, including the forestry and watershed activities.

Ecosystem and biodiversity conservation initiatives can produce a wide range of tangible economic, as well as environmental benefits, including protection of drinking water sources, reduced erosion and sedimentation, protection of productive infrastructure, pollination, among others. The valuation, and in some instances the monetary quantification of these ecosystems and environmental services can be important inputs for:

- Justifying and deciding how to allocate public spending on conservation, preservation, or restoration initiatives;
- Considering the public's values, and encourage public participation and support for environmental initiatives;
- Comparing the costs and benefits of different projects or programs;
- Prioritizing conservation or restoration projects;
- Maximizing the environmental benefits per dollar spent; and,
- Informing public and private land-use planning decisions at local and national levels.

The proposed activity will seek to increase the awareness of environmental services and to identify mechanisms for valuing and paying for these services. This will be accomplished through a combination of training and direct technical assistance. Potential activities include the direct valuation of ecological benefits, such as watersheds, in specific landscapes or protected areas; incorporation of economic or valuation studies to a policy dialogue; training and capacity building for practitioners and decision-makers; and support for the development of fee-for-services systems for ecosystem services.

II. Justification for Environmental Determination

Specific interventions associated with the activities described above may include the following:

1. Identification and development of income generating initiatives that are compatible with conservation of the protected areas. A strong emphasis will be given to promoting the ecotourism potential of the region. This could include support for the construction of "ecolodges" and the opening of trails, but may also include apiculture, handicrafts, non-timber forest products;
2. Facilitate land titling and *saneamiento* of lands in and around the protected areas, including indigenous territories (TCO);
3. Environmental education and awareness raising, which includes the preparation of training materials and possibly the construction of interpretative centers co-managed by the National Park Service (SERNAP) and the local municipality;
4. Develop management plans for the protected areas and assist in the formation and functioning of the management committees (*comites de gestión*); and,
5. Develop the capacity of national, departmental and local actors, including indigenous groups, in areas such as land-use and environmental planning and conflict management.

With the exception of some small-scale construction activities (e.g., interpretive centers, ecotourism facilities, opening of trails), none of the proposed activities will have a

significant impact on the environment. They primarily involve capacity building, training, technical assistance and education.

The sustainable agriculture activity is not sufficiently well-defined at this point to be able to make a determination.

III. Recommended Threshold Decision

1. **Categorical Exclusion** for activities involving institutional strengthening, environmental education, technical assistance, training and other activities not having a significant impact on the natural environment, pursuant to 22 CFR 216.2(c)(2)(i), (ii), (iii), and (xiv).
2. **Negative Determination** for activities involving small-scale construction (e.g., interpretative centers, parkguard facilities, ecotourism lodges). Implementation of these activities must adhere to LAC-approved environmental guidelines, copies of which will be provided to the implementing partners, who will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating implementation of the mitigation measures. Electronic version of the guidelines can be found at the following site:
http://www.usaid.gov/locations/latin_america_caribbean/environment/docs/epiq/chap2/lac-guidelines-2-small-scale-infrastructure.pdf
3. **Deferred Decision** for the sustainable agriculture component. Should any of the proposed activities include support for the procurement and/or use of pesticides, a supplemental IEE, prepared as per 22 CFR 216.3(b), will be submitted to the BEO.

Approval:

 Morris Israel
 Mission Environment Officer

 Date

Concurrence with Recommended Threshold Decision:

 Liliana Ayalde
 Mission Director
 USAID/Bolivia

 Date

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Clearances:

HFerrette, ENV _ in draft ____

Date 6/3/05

ELandau, DD _____

Date [6/14/05]

BBayle, REA-SA__in draft_____

Date 6/9/05